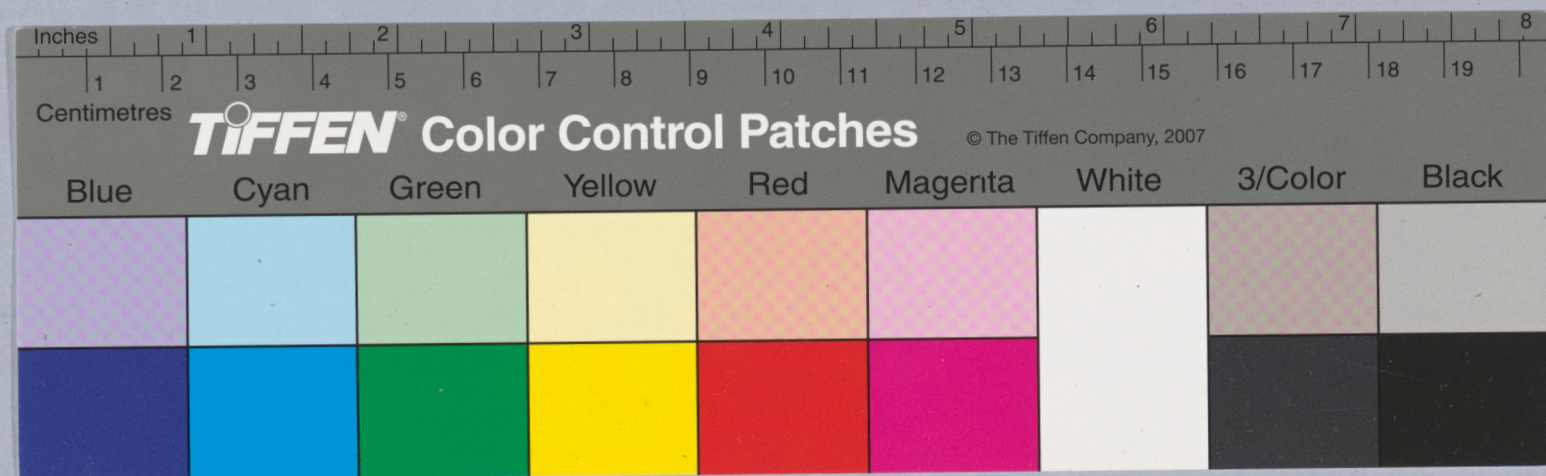




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Serial issues

New International Bulletin

NEW INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN

DOCUMENTS of the NEW INTERNATIONAL

Vol. 2, No. 1

MARCH, 1937

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FOREWORD

THE TASKS BEFORE THE POUM

1. The documents reproduced in the first section of this issue clearly show the development of the Stalinist policy of repression of the POUM: the campaign of slander, the expulsion from the Catalanian government, the suppression of its Madrid paper and radio station. From the POUM, the repression began to spread to the CNT; as their French sympathetic organ, "La Revolution Proletarienne", states, "The Syndicalist daily, 'C.N. T.' of Madrid, was suspended for an indefinite period...its last issue was confiscated at the print shop."

This repression has brought the two organizations closer together in Spain, and internationally has had similar repercussions among those tendencies in the labor movement who, with whatever political differences and criticisms, support one or the other of these organizations. In Spain, a joint agreement was signed by all the anti-fascist organizations (except the Stalinist PSUC and the UGT which it controls) pledging themselves not to resort to slander as a political weapon. In the United States, the organizations sympathetic to the CNT in their press protest against the persecution of the POUM and some of them are in favor of a united front campaign to protest against the repressions of the POUM and the CNT.

If the repressions are not stopped, it is clear that they will go further and further: from the POUM to the CNT, from the outlying Madrid branches to the strongholds in Catalonia, from suppressing the press and radio to declaring the organizations illegal, driving them underground, bringing their leaders before a firing squad. This can only weaken the objective struggle of the Spanish workers against fascism, and work objectively toward the victory of Franco.

2. For this reason we, like every other working-class organization, must express our solidarity with the comrades of the POUM and the CNT against the repressions of the Stalinists and their bourgeois allies, and raise our voice in protest against these counter-revolutionary actions. We reprint documents of the POUM which give their position in the face of this repression and present their defense and counter-attack against the persecution.

3. The fight which the POUM is carrying on against the Stalinist repression suffers from serious shortcomings: it does not pose the basic differences, but limits itself to a superficial, merely organizational quarrel against the "maneuver", against the "interference". It does not state why the Stalinists attack the POUM and the CNT, nor counterpose a clear political line to the line of the Stalinists.

The POUM and the CNT both stand for "a workers' revolution", and both are opposed to "the defense of the bourgeois republic". The Stalinists are committed to the People's Front, that is, to the maintenance of bourgeois law and order, and the beheading of the proletarian revolution in order to cut it down to fit the limits of bourgeois democracy. They want a regular army controlled by the military specialists and free from the control of workers' organizations; they want a strong, authoritarian government retaining and restoring the old apparatus of the state as it was before July 1936.

The POUM issues slogans "For a Workers' Government", "For Workers' Police Patrols", "For Committees of Workers, Peasants and Soldiers", "For Soldiers' Committees". It counterposes the Workers' Alliance, that is, the fighting united front of workers' organizations, to the People's Front. But its actual practical work does not flow from these slogans, and in fact contradicts them. It has not established soldiers' committees even in its own militia columns. It has never repudiated its major political mis-

takes of the past: the participation in the People's Front electoral bloc in February, 1936, the participation in the Catalanian Generalitat from September to December, 1936. Even now, expelled from participation in the People's Front coalition government with the bourgeoisie in Catalonia, it continues to participate in the coalition government in Valencia.

4. In order to carry on a political fight, and not merely an abstractly organizational one in the name of "workers' unity" and "workers' democracy", it would have to demarcate itself sharply from the People's Front policy of the Stalinists. This it is unable to do even in theory, as shown by the article in "La Batalla" which we translate, with their ambiguous position. "With - without - against", "to the extent that...", "if..." - this is precisely the language which the Mensheviks used in 1917 to describe their position inside the Kerensky Government. This only adds to the confusion among the Spanish workers, prevents them from understanding the real nature and necessary consequences of the People's Front, and makes it impossible for the POUM to carry on a political fight against Stalinism.

The delegates of the LRWP told the leaders of the POUM, in Barcelona and in Brussels, in October of last year, that the Spanish revolution was facing a crisis; that it had already passed its high point and was beginning to go backward, that the policy of entering the Catalanian government was a mistake and that it was necessary to break with the Catalanian government immediately. (See NIR, Vol. 1 No.5, December, 1936). The POUM leadership was opposed to this position. It justified the dissolution of the workers' anti-fascist militia committees, the transference of power and of workers' support to the government. It thus took over its share of the responsibility for the reactionary acts of the government; just as its entry in the People's Front electoral bloc in February 1936 left it with a share of the responsibility for the treachery of the People's Front and its failure to defend the Spanish masses from the fascist revolt in July.

5. The repression of the Stalinists flows from their clear-cut policy of the People's Front, that is, of the subordination of the independent action of the proletariat to the interests of the bourgeoisie. The Stalinists, as the most consistent and extreme proponents of this policy, backed by the resources of the Soviet Union, force the other working-class organizations and tendencies more and more either to support their policies, to unite with them in action, and as an ultimate consequence to merge with them, or on the other hand, to fight them politically and organizationally, in which case they will be attacked as "Trotskyites".

The Socialist Party of Spain, headed by Largo Caballero, has gone a long way on the road of adaptation to and ultimate merger with the Stalinists. Their political line is that of the People's Front, the regular army, the defense of democracy, etc. Organizationally, their youth section has already joined the Stalinist youth, and their Catalanian sections have merged with the Stalinists, in both cases openly affiliating with the Third International. The S.P. of Spain itself has opened negotiations to this end with the CP. As an inseparable part of this development, Caballero & Co. had to attack the POUM, and specifically to confiscate its press and radio station in Madrid. The documents translated here show how he tries to shift the responsibility to the Catalanian government (for the actions of the Madrid Defense Council), and how the Generalitat in turn shifts the responsibility back to Madrid.

The Socialist Party of America, refusing to fulfill its international obligation to the Spanish workers, merely because it is not directly and immediately concerned, continues to support Caballero and the defense of democracy in Spain, at the same time issuing a platonic protest and carrying on an abstract discussion on the People's Front in general.

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6. The Trotskyists and certain elements which live politically as a caricature of the sectarian side of Trotsky's policies, for some time took the position that the participation of the POUM in the People's Front bloc and the Catalanian government, called for their denunciation as traitors. We criticized these actions sharply (MEB Vol.1 nos.4 and 5), but rejected the characterization of "betrayal", which had the political effect of closing the door to collaboration or support of any kind. Our position was and is that of support of the Spanish workers' revolutionary struggle against fascism, and with regard to the POUM, material support and political criticism.

Comrade Trotsky, in his recent interview with the Havas agency, and the Trotskyites in various countries, have dropped the characterization of betrayal, and are approaching the policy of "critical" support. Under the pressure of events, of criticism and possibly also of internal discussion, they have come over to our position on the POUM.

7. For the POUM to function as a political force, which is the only way in which it can meet the attacks of the Stalinists and their allies, it will have to carry on a serious evaluation of its past policies with respect to the People's Front and participation in the government, and hammer out a line of revolutionary policy which will translate into practice the revolutionary slogans which it issues. On this basis, it will be able to educate the thousands of raw elements who have joined it since July, carry out an internal reorganization which will transform it into a disciplined revolutionary organization and attract to itself the scattered revolutionary elements within the UGT and the CNT. In the struggle to this end, the left wing of the party can crystallize and clarify itself, differentiating and separating itself from those reformist and centrist elements who want to find a common ground on which conciliation with the Stalinists might be possible. In this way, the revolutionary elements of the POUM can become the objective force that will lead the Spanish workers to victory in the revolutionary struggle against fascism.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM THE BARCELONA CONFERENCE?

1. The POUM took the initiative, and jointly with the London Bureau took the responsibility, for the calling of the Barcelona Conference, now scheduled for May 1, 1937. This conference, like the Brussels Congress of last year, is a type of "New Zimmerwald" conference; that is, as in 1915, we are confronted with the collapse of the old Internationals, the need of a new revolutionary international (which today can only be the Fourth International), and the fact that the elements for building it are scattered and disintegrated. As in 1915, it is necessary to establish an international discussion through conferences, to crystallize the revolutionary elements and separate them from the reformists and centrists.

2. We have consistently fought any attempts to exclude any section of the revolutionary movement from such a conference. Specifically, when Schwab last November stated that Gorkin of the POUM was opposed to admitting "Trotskyites" to the Barcelona Conference, we challenged his statement in a letter to Gorkin, and came out in favor of admitting not only those affiliated organizationally with Leon Trotsky but also other groups like ours who are for a Fourth International while organizationally distinct and having certain political differences with the Trotskyites, on the road to the Fourth International. Gorkin's answer has not been received, but in conversation with our Comrade Krehm, he stated that he never was and is not now in favor of the exclusion of the Trotskyites or of the other Fourth Internationalist groups.

3. In this issue we translate two Trotskyite documents, explaining why they are going to the Barcelona Conference and why they did not go to the Brussels Congress. We need not pay much attention to the unintelligent reference to "Field, the anti-Trotskyite, sectarian, etc.", or to the comical scorn with which they refer to the lack of mass following of the parties of the London Bureau (outside of the POUM). So far

as we know, the ILP alone has more members than such "mass" organizations as the Socialist Party of America.

What is important is the results of participation in the Brussels Congress. According to the document, these results were harmful. It gave the centrists a common program, the attack on "Trotskyism", while if we and the RSAP had not been present, there would have been no common basis, and consequently, the London Bureau would have gone to pieces - by itself. This is a non-Marxist, fatalistic position, wrong in theory and contradicted by the facts. It is wrong because it denies the subjective role of the revolutionists in influencing the development of centrist organizations; it says that this development will proceed in a more satisfactory manner if the revolutionists abstain from action, and leave it to the "historical process". This from an organization which had actually liquidated itself into reformist organizations in order to "influence" them from within.

It is contradicted by the facts. It was precisely the Trotskyites' policy of abstention toward the London Bureau that helped to keep it together. It was precisely by participating in the conference that we had the opportunity to bring out into the open those issues which are burning questions within the centrist parties; Spain, the Fourth International, the Soviet Union. By demanding clarity and clean-cut political positions on these issues, we forced the right wing (Schwab, Brockway, etc.), to appear openly, not only against the left wingers in their own parties, but against other parties of the London Bureau which were moving left. In spite of our small forces, this was more than abstentionism and ultimatism had been able to accomplish since the Declaration of Four. This appeared in the discussion in the press of the ILP, the SAP, the Dutch RSB, and others, of our position for a Fourth International, for clarity before unity, for the building of a revolutionary movement by participation in mass organizations and the clarification, differentiation and separation of revolutionists from reformists and centrists.

4. The Trotskyites on this issue, too, are apparently being forced by events to make concessions to the line of participation, even though they do not want openly to change their line. For this reason, they resort to flimsy argumentation: Barcelona is not Brussels, the revolutionary Spanish masses will exert an influence on the decisions in Barcelona (apparently not on the PSUC - besides, if revolutionists should participate in conferences only if there is a favorable revolutionary milieu, why did the Trotskyites pick for their conference last August, of all places - Geneva ?)

This nonsense is an actual obstacle to a principled revision of their sectarian line of the past toward the centrist organizations and a principled acceptance of the "New Zimmerwald" line on the basis of the independent activity of the revolutionary organization. This revision is necessary if the Trotskyites are to be a force in the development of the revolutionary movement and the actual building of a real Fourth International.

5. The growing influence of Stalinism is one of the forces that is disintegrating the London Bureau. The Stalinist line of the People's Front forces every group and organization to take a position, to declare itself and either line up with the Stalinists and the bourgeoisie, or carry on a revolutionary struggle against Stalinism and all forms of conciliation with it, social-democratic or Stalinist reformism. The POUM has no choice in the matter - no form of conciliation is objectively possible, because the Spanish events immediately translate every programmatic position into practice. They must fight the CP and the CI, or liquidate. The other parties of the London Bureau are still trying to find compromises, half-way solutions which will not "isolate them from the masses", but make possible some form of unprincipled unity with the Stalinists. The ILP has opened a "unity campaign" with the CP and the Socialist League (whose first achievement in unity was its expulsion from the Labour Party). The ILP can still make "reservations" about the People's Front. Actually they are

(Continued on last page)

SPANISH DOCUMENTS

RESOLUTIONS OF THE P. O. U. M.

(Adopted by the Plenum of the Enlarged Central Committee of the PCUM, Jan. 1937)

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I. POLITICAL RESOLUTION

The Bourgeoisie Attempts to Raise its Head - The revolution begun on July 19th, as an immediate result of the military-fascist uprising, is going through a critical period. The bourgeoisie, terrorized in the first phase of the movement, is attempting to raise its head, infiltrating into the institutions created by the revolution and occupying the strategic positions which it had lost. In order to achieve its aims, it is not presenting its intentions openly, but as usual, in all people's revolutions, it is making use of the parties and groups of the petty bourgeoisie, and even of the working-class, in order to carry on its work with greater guarantees of efficiency and of unity.

This work finds an exceptionally favorable environment in the occupational situation created by the war. The imperious necessity of winning the war, the complicated problems which it poses, and its necessities constitute a factor which, cleverly managed, has an extraordinary power of suggestion over the masses and favors the plans of those who claim to bury the revolution by forcing it within the narrow framework of the democratic republic. The working-class must realize that its whole future is at stake, that war and revolution are inseparable, that only by destroying the basis of the capitalist regime to the roots will all possibilities for victory of fascism be destroyed.

If Fascism Has Not Conquered, It Is Due Exclusively To The Heroism of the Working-Class - If fascism did not triumph by a thunderclap on July 19th, this was due entirely and exclusively to the heroic energy of the working class which, caught by surprise, unarmed, was able to oppose a barrier to the fascist advance, and, taking possession of the arms of the enemy, destroy all resources of power of the old regime and attack the rights of private property, thereby beginning a profound revolution. Thanks to this circumstance, of immense historical importance, the proletariat went on to exercise the absolute hegemony over the revolutionary movement, and the petty bourgeois parties, at whose tailend the working-class had followed for years, disappeared almost completely from the political scene.

They Are Trying To Undermine the Positions Conquered by the Working-Class - It is the positions conquered by the proletariat which they are attempting to undermine at the present time and which, in part, they have succeeded in doing. The Central Government, even apart from its composition, is a typical government of "sacred union", a jealous guardian of the precepts of a democratic-bourgeois constitution, made completely obsolete by the events, which in no way differs fundamentally from the previous government of the People's Front. The government of Catalonia, aside from being of similar composition, has been infinitely more progressive than the central government inasmuch as it has had to function in a different political environment, determined by the existence of two organizations, the C.N.T. and the P.O.U.M., which maintain revolutionary positions, and have

prevented the petty bourgeois ideology from infecting the working-class movement and putting it at the service of the interests of the democratic petty-bourgeoisie.

The Elimination of the P.O.U.M. - The attempt to eliminate the POUM from the Council of the Generality, the first step of a vast maneuver whose second step would be the elimination of the CNT, is undertaken in order to change this state of affairs creating favorable conditions for putting a brake on the revolution.

We Must Finish With The Bourgeois Parliament - Under these circumstances, the Central Committee of the POUM believes that one of the most effective means for warding off the effects of this vast maneuver, for consolidating the conquests of the working-class and stimulating the revolutionary process, consists in neutralizing suitable organs of expression for the revolutionary aspirations of the working-class, which bring the masses together and can constitute the basis for the future regime. To maintain the bourgeois parliament at this time is an anachronism that can be fatal. The democratic parliament is an institution which corresponds to the stage before July 19th. Neither by its composition nor by its spirit can it respond to the revolutionary necessities of the present moment. It is not parliament that can forge the new society, but a constituent assembly which will lay the basis for a Spain free from the oppression of landlords and capitalists, for the union of Socialist Republics.

Assembly of Committees of the Factories, Representatives of the Peasants and Soldiers- The representatives of this assembly cannot be elected by the system of universal suffrage, a survival of the democratic bourgeois regime, but must be elected by the workers, the peasants and the soldiers, represented by the shop and factory committees, the peasant assemblies and the delegates from the front. From this assembly must arise the new socialist structure of the country and the workers and peasants government which will represent the rising will of the masses who are struggling against fascism and spilling their blood, not for the democratic republic but for a society free of capitalist exploitation.

Workers Democracy - The Enlarged Central Committee of the POUM, finally, regards as an indispensable condition for the definitive victory of the proletariat and as the guarantee for the revolution, a vast and profound workers democracy which guarantees the revolution against any attempt at dictatorial hegemony by any particular party or organization. For this purpose it believes it absolutely indispensable that the shop and factory committees be elected directly at the general assemblies of the workers therein, that the labor unions meet in assemblies, and that, in a word, the whole working-class participate actively and directly in the discussion and resolutions of all the serious problems that the war and the revolution placed before the country.

The fundamental slogans of the movement therefore are :

DISSOLUTION OF THE BOURGEOIS PARLIAMENT !
CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY OF THE DELEGATES OF THE FACTORY
COMMITTEES, PEASANTS' REPRESENTATIVES, AND DELEGATES
FROM THE FRONT !
WORKERS AND PEASANTS GOVERNMENT, WORKERS DEMOCRACY !

II. INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTION

1. In a period of world crisis of capitalism - a chronic and definitive crisis of the entire system - and of maturity of the objective conditions for the revolution, that which conquered in the different countries, except Russia, has been the counter-revolution. In a situation in which the only progressive way out which offers itself to humanity, is socialism, that which imposed itself by circumstances, has been fascism. The immediate cause of this contradiction must be found, not only in the

complete bankruptcy of bourgeois democracy, which has been rendered obsolete by the social necessities and the urge to liberation of the great masses of people, which has turned it into a reactionary stage of society but also in the no less complete bankruptcy of reformist socialism and in the impotence of official communism, degenerated and bureaucratic, to lead the proletariat to the revolution. As a result, bourgeois democracy has shown its bankruptcy as a social regime, and the Second and Third Internationals as instruments for the revolutionary emancipation of the working masses.

2. Everything permits us to hope that the Spanish revolution, begun in December 1930 and April 1931, and which has received all its impetus as a result of the attempt at fascist counterrevolution, has come to close the period of great defeats of the international proletariat and of the victories of fascism. Our revolution is eminently proletarian and socialist and as such, internationalist. It constitutes simply a new link in the chain of revolutions. It opens a new stage in the world proletarian revolution.

3. The civil war unleashed in Spain between socialism and fascism goes beyond the national limits. Spain has become an international center for the class struggle, for the fight to the death between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat. At the side of the Spanish bourgeoisie, we find the bourgeoisie of all countries; at the side of the Spanish proletariat, we find the international proletariat. We greet with deep feeling the presence among our fighters of the revolutionary workers of other countries and the solidarity of the international proletariat which, in helping us to conquer in Spain, is working for the world revolution. In this sense, we rise energetically against all those, within and outside of Spain, who, by proclaiming that the purpose of our struggle is the defense of the democratic republic, contribute to disarm the working-class ideologically and politically.

4. While Hitler and Mussolini and world capitalism were actively helping Spanish fascism which had risen to arms, from the very first moment, the Labor and Socialist International (2nd International), and the International Trade Union Federation, as well as the governments in which the Socialists participate, declared themselves neutral. Under such circumstances, this neutrality is a betrayal of the interests of the proletariat and of socialism. Such an attitude shows once again the bankruptcy of reformist socialism, whose policies favor alone, and exclusively, the fascist reaction. We invite the international proletariat to struggle actively against the policy of neutrality, and to bring us, over the heads of its treacherous leaders, an ever more effective revolutionary aid.

5. The Soviet Government during the first two months of the struggle in Spain, associated itself with the policy of neutrality, thus permitting the resistance and advance of Spanish fascism. The pressure of the toiling masses and the danger of seeing the positions of fascism in all of Europe, and particularly in Germany, strengthened as a result of a possible victory of Spanish fascism, have caused a change of attitude by the Soviet Government. We greet with enthusiasm, the aid of the Russian people and we say to it that, faithful to our traditional attitude, we shall remain, with weapons in hand, ready to run to its aid at any time in the face of the possible attacks of the world bourgeoisie. Still we insist on declaring likewise that we are prepared to prevent by all the means within our reach, that in exchange for material aid anyone claiming to intervene in or monopolize the leadership of the Spanish proletariat with any other purposes than its own, which are those of its revolutionary emancipation. For this reason, we reaffirm our conviction that the best way to aid and defend the Soviet proletariat consists in the triumph of the Spanish revolution and driving forward the international revolution.

6. A widely spread opinion in Spain and abroad attempts to prove that the Spanish civil war can determine the outbreak of a new, imperialist world war. We rise up against this cynical deception. The imperialist war, if it happens, will be the result of the contradictions of the capitalist regime and of the rivalries among imperialist states and groups of states. The only way of getting rid of war consists in getting rid of the system which creates it, that is, the capitalist system. In struggling for the triumph of the socialist revolution, the Spanish proletariat is struggling effectively for peace. The cause of peace, therefore, identifies itself with the cause of our revolution, which pursues the destruction of capitalism and the triumph of socialism. Like Lenin during the war and after the Russian revolution, we proclaim before the world proletariat the necessity of struggling in a revolutionary manner against war and, if the imperialist war breaks out, of transforming it into a civil war, into armed insurrections.

7. The governments of France and of England, frightened by the international radiation of the Spanish revolution, are trying to strangle it by means of a possible armistice or a pact with the fascists. The League of Nations which from its foundation has shown itself incapable of making respected the right of people to dispose of themselves, which is nothing more than an organization for the protection of capitalist interests, adopts the proposal of the Franco-English governments. We rise energetically against the attempt to strangle the march of the revolution in Spain and we maintain firmly our slogan: "TO THE VERY END ! TO VICTORY OR TO DEATH !"

8. The proletariat, in order to win, needs the existence of revolutionary parties, under an international discipline. This poses the question of the revolutionary International. This International does not exist. The Second and the Third Internationals are not, and cannot be, the instrument for the world revolution. No more can the Fourth International be such an instrument, founded by Trotsky without roots among the masses, because of its sectarian character. The historical circumstances have turned our country into the actual center of the world revolutionary struggle, and turned our party into a point of convergence of the independent Marxist groups and parties of the different countries. The International Conference held last October in Brussels, conferred on our Party, together with the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity, the task of calling in Barcelona, an international conference of the independent socialist and communist parties, with the purpose of analyzing the events and driving forward the forces for the future organization of a truly revolutionary International. Our party is prepared to carry out this task in a worthy manner, in agreement with the London Bureau, conscious that the Spanish revolution has as its purpose, to drive the international revolution forward, by the destruction of capitalism and the realization of socialism.

III. TRADE UNION RESOLUTION

Having analyzed in detail the trade union policy to be followed by the Party under the new conditions created by the revolution, the Enlarged Central Committee affirms:

- a. That the trade unions have lost the character of instruments of struggle on the economic field against capitalism.
- b. That they have been transformed into organisms through which in reality the new economic structure is coming into existence.
- c. That nevertheless they have not lost the character of instruments in the service of the class struggle.

On the basis of these three fundamental characteristics, the Enlarged Central Committee agrees:

First: to elect a Trade Union Secretariat.

Second: To organize trade union and industrial fractions on a local scale.

Third: To remain in the U.G.T. and to speed up the entry into it of the trade unions which were formerly in the F.O.U.S.

Fourth: To democratize the internal regime in the U.G.T. by holding as many meetings as possible, or in other cases demanding meetings.

Fifth: To accelerate the process of collectivization by federating in each locality the collectivized enterprises of the same industry, with the object of centralizing production and sale as a transitional stage toward socialization.

Sixth: To elect a Committee for Economic Studies with the purpose of orientating the tasks to be realized in the new economic phase.

Seventh: To expose the reformist economic policies of the present leadership of the U.G.T., thus preparing the subjective conditions which will lead to breaking the tie between the U.G.T. and the P.S.U.C. and struggling for the independence of the trade union organization, fighting at the same time all over for the calling of a Congress of the U.G.T.

Eighth: To take advantage of the present favorable conditions for trade union unity, to accelerate the crystallization of this unity into a single center, and to undertake around this slogan a campaign of agitation and propaganda, fighting for the creation as a transitional phase of joint committees among the local federations of the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. and the holding of joint meetings, with the purpose of preparing favorable conditions for the calling of a merger Congress.

Ninth: To accelerate the tempo of production in all those industries which are working for the war.

Tenth: To carry on agitation and propaganda around these slogans at the places of work and in meetings.

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AGAINST THE PERSECUTION OF THE POUM
FOR AN INVESTIGATION OF THE CHARGES!

THE P.O.U.M. AND THE CRISIS
IN THE GENERALIDAD.

(La Batalla - organ of the POUM - December 16, 1936)

TO ALL WORKERS :

Imposed by the P.S.U.C. (United Socialist Party of Catalonia, adhering to 3rd International), which has put a brake on all the revolutionary work of the proletariat of Catalonia, the crisis in the Government of the Generalidad has broken out.

The leaders of the P.S.U.C. and of the U.G. T. think that the moment has come which will permit them to put a barrier before the rising revolution and to make a supreme effort to keep it in. The crisis which they have provoked means nothing else. They consider the elimination of the P.O.U.M. from the government indispensable, because they know that our Party will not allow the destruction of the conquests of the Revolution within the government.

With the P.O.U.M. out of the Government, the P.S.U.C. attempts to assure itself of impunity in the reconstruction of a regular army which is to be entirely in the hands of military professionals; they want to remove the army from the control of the workers; they want to prevent the creation of the army of the Revolution, whose basis is the workers' militias.

The P.S.U.C. aims to constitute a "Government with full powers", a Government whose Councillors escape from the control of the organizations; in short, a strong government which can use its energy only against the revolutionary creative impulse of the proletariat.

The Central Committee of the P.O.U.M., now meeting in Barcelona, considers it an ineluctable duty to denounce before the working class the maneuver which is being attempted against the revolution that began on July 19, in answer to the fascist provocation.

Presumably the entire Central Committee of the P.O.U.M. considers indispensable the unity in action of the proletariat in order to bring to an end the struggle against fascism and for the proletarian revolution.

If this unity in action is broken, it will not be our fault. We have made incalculable efforts to prevent it from being broken. We are prepared to continue these efforts still, on behalf of the socialist revolution.

If in spite of our efforts and our sacrifices, the unity in action is broken, the fault will not be ours. It will be the fault of those who subordinate everything to their party ambitions, and we are sure that in the not too distant future the facts will prove us right. Unfortunately, the results of this maneuver, which, carried on at this moment, can only help the common enemy, are still to be experienced. That is why we are obliged to denounce it before the working class of Catalonia.

FOR THE ENLARGED CENTRAL COMMITTEE:

Andrés Nin, Julian Gorkin, Jose Rovira, Jordi Arquer, Jose Coll, Juan Andrade, Enrique Gironella, Pedro Bonet, Molins Fabrega, of the Executive Committee; Jose Marti, for the City of Barcelona; Jose Farras, for the Barcelona Marches;

Juan Farré, for the Lérida District; Miguel Gaygold, for the Gerona District; Francisco Oliva, for the Tarragona District; Sixto Raminad, for Valencia; Julian Peirat, for Castellón; Enrique Rodríguez, for Madrid; Julio Cid, for Andalusia; Urbano Armesto for Guadalajara; Eduardo Mauricio, for Extramadura; Ramón Gracia, for Aragon; Miguel Tufet for the Alcubierre front; Salvader Aymerich, for the Tierz front; Antonia Perena, for the Vicien front; Francisco Llovera, for the Quicens front; Enrique Sancho, for the A Apies front; Juan Vila, for the Cuarte front; Romualdo Fuentes, for the Madrid front; Fernando Navarro, for the Bellestar front; for the P.O.U.M. Youth, Wildebaldo Sobalde

THE P.O.U.M. BEFORE THE SITUATION CREATED BY THE CRISIS OF THE
GENERALITAT

(Speech by Andrés Nin on the Present Political Situation - "La Batalla"
December 17th, 1936)

From the microphone of Radio P.O.U.M., retransmitted by Radio Barcelona and the
"Radio Association of Catalonia".

On July 19th, the fascist militarists arose in arms against the democratic republic and against the working-class. The proletariat was able to react with energy and to crush fascist militarism completely. The bourgeois power fell into the middle of the street.

The situation of Catalonia at that time was the following: the working - class was the absolute master of everything; the government of the Generalitat, a faithful reflection of the situation before July 19th, had no authority before the masses of the people. The real and effective power was in the hands of the Central Militias Committee, which arose on July 19th. Admittedly, the Central Militias Committee was not an authentically proletarian organization; it also included representatives of the petty bourgeois and the reformist forces. As was logical, a duality of powers was established between the Council of the Generalitat and the Central Militias Committee.

When the Casanovist government was constituted, our Party, conscious of its historical responsibility, fought for the formation of an authentic workers' government.

Later, when the present government which has just resigned from the Generalitat, was formed, we insisted on the necessity of forming a workers' government. Granted that the criterion that prevailed was that of constituting a government in which all the anti-fascist forces would be represented. We accepted the formula proposed under two conditions: that there be a workers majority and that a program of socialist transformation be undertaken. The first condition was realized, and a series of socialist measures were undertaken.

Nevertheless, the reality demonstrated that the government had no authority, that its orders were not obeyed, that its prestige before the masses of workers was not sufficient.

From the beginning, there appeared a fundamental difference on two essential questions: the war, and the question of internal safety.

With respect to the war, we believe that the remains of the old army must be destroyed. The militias are ineffective; we need an army that we can oppose to the well-equipped, disciplined and trained army of Franco. But this army must be a workers' and revolutionary army. It is certain that we will have to resort to the bourgeois military technicians. The question is if these technicians are to have absolute control or if they have to be under the power of the working-class. We naturally, declare ourselves in favor of the latter criterion, and fight for the creation of a commissariat of war, directed by workers' organizations.

The petty bourgeois parties and the P.S.U.C. fight to have the military technicians act as absolute masters in control of the army, and to have the Councillor of Safety free from control or interference by anybody. This last, of course, was directed against the Council of Safety. A little later the P.S.U.C. and the U.G.T. presented to the C.N.T. a document in which they demanded the following: a government with full powers, a Commissariat of War and the removal of the socialist control.

Under the present circumstances, a government can be strong only if it represents the revolutionary proletariat. With respect to the other two points, we have stated our opinion above.

War and revolution are completely inseparable. To eliminate the work of social transformation which is being carried on, is equivalent to leaving things in the same position as they were on July 19th.

The P.S.U.C. wants to eliminate us from the Council of the Generalitat. The reasons according to them are that we attack the U.S.S.R. and that we have not complied with the decrees ordered by the Council of the Generalitat.

We have been the first defenders of the U.S.S.R. when those who are attacking us today used to cover it with insults and calumnies. We thank the Russian people for the help which it gives us but at the same time Mexico helps us too. But no one can compel us. We demand that the working class of Catalonia be the absolute master of its destinies. We reject interference no matter where it comes from.

They want to eliminate us because we are faithful to the proletarian revolution, because we defend intransigently the conquest of the revolution. We will not tolerate within or without the Council any effort to make abortive, the magnificent movement in which we are living.

It is necessary to avoid the breaking of the unity in action of the working class.

We do not reject the help of the petty bourgeoisie if it is willing to accept the positions of the proletariat.

We can be eliminated from the Council, but we will not be eliminated from the Front, from the life of the trade unions, from public life in general.

If a Council is constituted without the P.O.U.M., it will have less authority than the previous one, because one of the most important proletarian forces will not form part of it.

READ WORKER VOICE

ORGAN OF LEAGUE FOR A REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY - CANADIAN SECTION

CONCERNING THE CHARACTER AND THE MEANING OF THE NEW COUNCIL OF THE GENERAL-
ITAT.

("Daily Political Notes", La Batalla - December 19, 1936)

Amplifying its editorial of the last few days, "Solidaridad Obrera" (organ of the Anarchist controlled CNT- ed.) of yesterday, printed a new article under the title, "A Government Free from Political Influences". The statement alone is enough to make one understand the substance of the article and the error of political understanding which it commits. It attempts to interpret the meaning of the new government and thereby to justify its constitution and the intervention of the CNT in it. The task is difficult and in spite of the intentions of the editorial writer of "Solidaridad Obrera", he does not succeed in solving it.

A government "free from political influences" can have two meanings: unpolitical in the general sense which anarchism gives to that word, or, in the sense of the exclusion of the parties which represent the interests of the bourgeois and the petty bourgeois classes. Unless I am mistaken, the new Council of the Generalitat, has neither of these two characteristics which the CNT organ proposes.

In the first place, there is a profound contradiction between the present opinion of "Solidaridad Obrera" and the attitude which the CNT took during the development of the crisis. We understood that the principal thing for the CNT was the maintenance of the bloc of all the workers' parties, which was being attacked by the P.S.U.C., by demanding our expulsion in an ultimatic manner. All of us believed, and this was also the statement of "Solidaridad Obrera" itself that this and no other was the political meaning of the crisis in the Council of the Generalitat.

But there is something more, nor can it be said that the new government has an unpolitical character in the sense that the anarchists desire. There is represented in it the Republican Left, which is exclusively a political party of the petty bourgeoisie. There appear as ministerial delegates of the U.G.T., not individuals who have won authority up to the present time exclusively as trade union leaders, but individuals who have been but little connected with the leadership of the U.G.T. and whose prevalent characteristic above everything else is that of leaders of the Socialist Party. It is evident, in spite of all the Machiavellian tricks that can be played with words and with political concepts, that in reality, nobody, not even the CNT itself, desired an unpolitical government; that the expression arises today, with the sole purpose of giving a sophist's explanation of the solution of a crisis which appears before the eyes of the working class in its true character: a plot consciously organized and, we can say, employing the language of politics, organized as well, with the "intervention of extraneous elements", for the purpose of eliminating a party which stands on eminently revolutionary positions on behalf of the working-class.

The description of "government free from political influences" can also mean a ministerial grouping apart from the old political or petty bourgeois formations. This seems even less likely. There remains the Esquerra (Left-ed.) with its entire political physiognomy as an old party which went bankrupt on October 6th and on July 19, and even since.

Through the various organs of opinion, particularly those of the CNT and of the P.S.U.C., we can appreciate clearly the profound differences that exist with regard to the program to be carried on by the government. This indicates the lack of homogeneity of the government as to the criterion of the application of government power. "Solidaridad Obrera" says precisely in the same article on which we are commenting, "we cannot admit, not even as a suggestion, certain ideas which have been launched during these days of crisis by representatives of certain sections of the proletariat and petty bourgeois forces, which they are committed to circulate with a view to influencing public opinion in the columns of the press to the effect that

for the present the only concern of interest is 'to dedicate oneself exclusively to the task of organizing the war leaving to one side the structure of future economy, in order not to impose on anybody solutions for the problems of tomorrow'. Not the task upon which we and all workers have entered, with the cooperation of the petty bourgeoisie, is to win the war at the front and to build the revolution on the economic and social field behind the front. To leave aside the second part for the time when the war will have been won, would mean to condemn the workers to return to a period of violent struggles in which passions would rise to red heat, continuing the civil war in an endemic form. To launch this idea is not only a failure to keep the promises which have been made, but is a grave crime".

It results from what has been transcribed here that the leaders of the CNT, or at least the editors of "Solidaridad Obrera" have not understood the whole political depth of the crisis which has just come to a head, since the proposal was exclusively that of forming a ministerial grouping on the basis of leaving out of its activities any profound transformations in a socialist sense, of the structure of the state. And if we have been eliminated, it was not because we are politicians, but because of our REVOLUTIONARY POLITICS.

Andrade.

THE CRISIS OF FOREIGN INTERFERENCE

Today, As Well As Yesterday, the P.O.U.M. Will Be At Its Post, In The Struggle
Against Fascism and for the Social Revolution.

(La Batalla, December 18th, 1936)

The recent crisis of the Council of the Generalitat of Catalonia and its solution result in certain experiences and certain conclusions which must be placed in relief. We shall do this with our customary clarity.

First of all: a point to which we have already called attention on previous occasions and which resulted in a note to which we gave the reply which it deserved. We refer to the foreign interference, to the extraordinary interventions, to the vetoes of those who should be at their posts and carry out their functions, apart from the parties and organizations who have to intervene in the political life of Catalonia and of Spain. On this occasion, we received a formal denial. The reality of the facts has come to prove that we were right. The crisis and its solution have been produced under the dictation of this foreign interference, and all the denials in the world will not be able to wipe out this truth. In any case, we stand today on the same position as yesterday: for our part, we shall oppose with all our energy the attempt of anybody, absolutely anybody, and under any pretext, to interfere in and monopolize the leadership of the Spanish proletariat for purposes which are not its own: those of its revolutionary emancipation, freely determined by itself.

Another statement of fact. The party which, moved by the interference in question, provoked the crisis, demanded, as all will recall, for the formation of a strong government - a government strong against the working class - the suppression of the organs which, representing the parties and the organizations which are struggling against fascism, exercise control over the public order and the defense. These organs, we suppose on the demand of the CNT comrades, will not be suppressed for the time being. This means to say that the fundamental question was to eliminate the POUM from the Council of the Generalitat. Once this immediate objective has been

reached, does anybody think that the party in question will give up its proposal? By no means. With our elimination, it has reached the first part. For the time being it does not feel itself strong enough to go further. But even now, following its established plan, it will try to sabotage the functioning of these organs, to undermine its bases. It will simply try to take a new step backward on the road of the revolution. And if the CNT puts up resistance, it will try to eliminate it as it did with the POUM. We must see here the germ of the next crisis, already latent in the Council from the moment of its constitution.

A third statement of fact. The new Council was organized on the basis of trade union organizations: CNT, UGT and the Union of Rabassaires (share-croppers -Ed.). The fact that the Esquerra has three councillors is the proof that this Council is not simply based on the trade union organizations. But there is more to it: The UGT is not directly represented. The three councillors named, Vidiella, Valdes, and Comorera, are not men from the UGT but from the PSUC. All the world knows that this is the truth. All the world can see the crude maneuver. And the first to see it are the trade union members of the UGT, who do not and cannot see themselves represented by these councillors.

Here are certain statements of fact which it is necessary to point out. They are statements which all, even the most backward, are making: they are truths which everyone knows, but which only we, as can be seen, have the courage and the energy to proclaim.

And now a few final words. We said yesterday that we left the Council of the Generalitat strengthened. This is rigorously exact. With all that we are and all that we are worth, at the front and behind the lines, we will continue the struggle against fascism and for the triumph of the socialist revolution. We will continue to stand for the necessity of the unity in action of the whole working class, because we consider that it is necessary, and indispensable, to crown the work that has been undertaken. We have not renounced, before or now, the right of criticism, because we consider that whoever renounces this right - above all under foreign interference - is not worthy of being active in politics. Thrust into the opposition, we shall act as an opposition. We shall not go back a single step nor permit that such a step be taken without our criticism, our opposition, our protest. Let everyone note this well.

WORKER'S ALLIANCE AND P.O.U.M.
("La Batalla", January 19, 1937)
(Editorial Reproduced from "El Combatiente Rojo")
(Organ of the POUM in Madrid, later suppressed)
(February 8, 1937)

We reproduce exactly, with the words erased by the censorship, the following interesting and timely editorial from "El Combatiente Rojo" of Madrid,

"The old slogan of our glorious October, which has completely proven its revolutionary effectiveness, is coming back to life as a burning issue. We refer to the Workers' Alliance.

The birth of the Workers' Alliance was due primarily to the two organizations which today, merged, constitute the POUM. It would not be difficult to remind those who participated actively in the proletarian insurrection of 1934 of the enormous difficulties which we had to overcome in order to have our slogan become a

reality. The unbounded fury of those who have always hurled their wrath against us, sabotaged as usual, a thing that represented a decisive step in the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat. The "Workers' Alliance" was called by them "The Holy Alliance of Counterrevolution and Fascism", in a pamphlet published with the sole purpose of fighting it.

How the "Holy Alliance of Counterrevolution and Fascism" led the struggle in the Asturias is unnecessary to recall today. Wherever it reached its highest form, in which the Workers' Alliance was made up of ALL THE WORKERS' POLITICAL AND TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS, the proletariat showed that thanks to its class unity, free of any tutelage and breaks imposed by the more or less democratic bourgeoisie, it is capable of carrying out its political and economic emancipation.

The death blow which Spanish fascism suffered in October, 1934, was not the work of the(censored).....petty bourgeoisie, but of the closely united proletariat under arms. If the form of revolutionary organization, the Workers' Alliance, which the Asturian proletariat adopted, had been imitated in the rest of Spain, it is certain that the political panorama today would be quite different from that which we see.

We are not going to examine today, the defects, the mistakes, and even the betrayals of which the working class was the victim because of the attitude of certain(censored)..... But we will analyze the circumstances which made possible the triumph of the Asturian proletariat in that magnificent gesture.

The Workers' Alliance, created by the REVOLUTIONARY agreement of the various organizations of which it was composed, was not limited to the unity in action of the two trade union centers. There also took part in it, all the workers' parties, including the F.A.I. The democratic parties which had already proven the bankruptcy of their policies, had nothing to do with it. It is necessary to emphasize the fact, that thanks to this, thanks to the political independence of the working-class, the triumph of Asturias was possible.

The P.O.U.M. has always been the most ardent defender of the unity of the proletariat. At those moments when the problem of the unity of the class comes into the foreground, the P.O.U.M. fights to have this unity made for revolutionary purposes, for class purposes, without falling into dependence on democratic illusions. The unity of the revolutionary proletariat can follow no other aim than the transformation of the bourgeois regime by the socialist, where the exploiters will have nothing to exploit.

Without ever falling into the defense of some more or less vague liberties consecrated in the(censored).....of parliamentary legality".

A NEW CRIME IS BEING PREPARED IN MOSCOW

Resolution of the Executive Committee of the P.O.U.M.

(21a Batalla" -- January 24, 1937)

A new sensational trial has been begun in Moscow. This time the prisoner's dock is occupied by Radek, Pyatakov, Muralov, Sokolnikov, Seribriakov and other less known names to the number of sixteen. Sixteen. Those who were shot in September were also sixteen. Undoubtedly, that makes a wagon load under Stalinist Thermidorism. In any case, these men like the others, are Bolsheviks of the old Guard, revolutionary fighters of the old times, old friends and comrades of Lenin, the 13th anniversary of whose death they celebrated, in their tombs, the others in their cells under the threat of being shot.

When Zinoviev, Kamenev and their fourteen companions were condemned and shot, we were the only ones in Spain to raise our voice in protest. It was our duty and we did it. Today again we must raise our voice to carry out the same duty. Shall we find companion voices? For the honor and the conscience of the Spanish proletariat, of our glorious Spanish revolution, let us hope that we will. Alone or with others, we cannot pass in silence, the new and monstrous crime which is being prepared in Moscow.

For we are convinced that the accused are innocent. Of what are they being accused? In the first place, of belonging to a "parallel Trotskyite center". For Stalin, to be a Trotskyite constitutes the most monstrous of crimes. We are not Trotskyites and have nothing to do with Trotskyism, but we believe that it is a tendency of the workers movement which is as legitimate as any other. Yet the fact is that of all those who were put on trial, so far as we know, the only oppositionists, the only Trotskyite, is Muralov, the hero of the revolutionary days of Moscow in October, 1917; the man who had the esteem of Lenin and Trotsky for his courage and his revolutionary integrity and honor. And against this man and his comrades, there was launched the disgraceful charge, without real proofs, of "fomenting differences and committing acts of terrorism", of "being in the service of espionage of certain foreign governments". We repeat that we are profoundly convinced of the innocence of the accused but even in the event that they submit to confessing guilt, we would then ask the following question: "What is happening in Russia, what is the situation in Stalin's Russia, if the comrades of Lenin, the best fighters of October, who have occupied the posts of greatest responsibility, had to resort to underground action, to opposition with all its consequences, before the policies of Stalin?"

For this to happen, it was necessary purely and simply that in present day Russia, the most elementary idea of workers' democracy be abolished, to fall into a bureaucratic regime of personal dictatorship. Of the October revolution, of the tradition of Lenin, there remains nothing or very little. The fighters of October, the former comrades of Lenin, today have become annoying witnesses, kill-joys, people who must be suppressed physically after they have been suppressed politically. Yesterday, Zinoviev, Kamenev and Smirnov. Today, Radek, Pyatakov, Muralov. Tomorrow, Bukharin...and then a new wagonload will be prepared. Stalin's unquestionable power reposes on terror.

The accused are denied any possibility of defense. In Lenin's time, at the trial of the Social-Revolutionaries, a foreign delegation of workers was permitted to attend. But those who were on trial lived on Soviet territory. During the famous "Industrial Party" trial, the accused, who are today even occupy bureaucratic posts in Russia, enjoyed all kinds of means of defense. Why are these denied to the great artisans with Lenin, of the revolution of 1917?

After the shooting of Zinoviev and Kamenev, the International Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity, proposed the formation of an international committee of investigation on the accusations formulated against them and against Trotsky himself. At that time we supported this initiative, which we support today with all our energy. The international proletariat must know the whole truth. It is impossible to ask that the cause of Russia be defended if the right to know what is going on in Russia is denied.

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE PCUM.

SUPPORT OUR

Spanish arms fund

OUR POSITION ON THE PEOPLE'S FRONT OF BOURGEOISIE AND WORKERS

("La Batalla"

February 7, 1937)

oOo

Even if the procedure is not new nor the language original, we admit that we would never have believed that Stalinism would resort to such methods with regard to our party. A campaign which has been undertaken now against us, has only two precedents in history: the insults and calumnies with which Menshevism covered the party of Lenin, and the cruel and criminal repression carried on in Germany against the Spartacists in Germany.

Clarity has always been the rule of our party. Clarity in its policies, clarity in its actions, clarity in its expressions. Therefore nothing in our position can be called deception or lying. In the files of our publications, our policies are ratified. It is a rich exhibit which nothing can tarnish.

For lack of better arguments, Stalinism today resorts to our position with regard to the People's Front in order to demand the dissolution of the POUM, the confiscation of its property and the indictment of its members. Our position as to the People's Front is not of today. That we oppose to the People's Front, the front of the working-class, that we deny that the petty bourgeoisie has any ability to provide leadership for the benefit of the proletariat, that the aim of all working class politics must be directed toward the revolution, this and all this is not of today. We repeat, let them go over our writings and they will see that we have held our present position for more than a year. Why is it that today, and precisely today, that Stalinism demands our dissolution as a party? Why do the bourgeois press and organizations rally to this campaign?

The question has deeper roots than would appear. In all this campaign, all these proceedings, all these policies which have their patrons in what are called the high spheres, have a single object and only one aim: to put a brake on the revolution and keep it within the democratic limits which very correctly were overflowed on July 19th. The situation is so critical and alarming that it is not only our party but also the very CNT - and let them look at their press to see if it is not so - puts itself on guard and gives voice to alarm.

Our party has a clear position on the People's Front. With the People's Front to the extent that it means aid in our struggle against fascism; without the People's Front if it refuses to go still further, up to the social revolution, and against the People's Front if it tries to bury the conquests of the revolution and prevent the working class from tracing the road of its own destiny for itself.

The Stalinists' duty is to give an answer to all the questions that the revolution raises before us. Ambiguities, calumnies, double-dealing in revolutionary politics is worthless. The POUM, which has drenched the battlefields with the blood of its best men has already a rich, even if short history, and a more than real influence within the Spanish proletariat. It is, therefore, perfectly useless to pray to God and Heaven for our dissolution as a class organization. And not only useless but produces the opposite results. The rifles of thousands of militiamen are on the alert against any counterrevolutionary maneuver.

READ LABOR FRONT

OPEN LETTER FROM P. O. U. M. OF MADRID
TO ALL MADRID WORKERS'
ORGANIZATIONS.

("La Batalla"

February 9, 1937)

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(On February 8th, 1937, the POUM radio station in Madrid was confiscated and the publication of "El Combatiendo Rojo" suspended by order of the Madrid authorities - NIB.)

Esteemed Comrades:- The elements which have undertaken the campaign of calumny against the POUM are stopping at nothing. We do not desire to go over today one by one all the injuries which have been committed against us but we have to fight against the maneuver which is already being outlined in a clear and precise manner.

Over the radio and through the press, it is being repeated with suspicious insistence that the POUM and the JCI (Youth Section of the POUM - NIB) are preparing acts of physical terror against the anti-fascist leaders at a moment when the fascists see that it is impossible for them to enter Madrid. What do they expect from this new deception? One of those famous trials perhaps? Whatever it may be, we are of the opinion that the accusation is of such seriousness that it requires the imperious intervention of all the proletarian organizations.

We believe that this is not only a private question which affects only two organizations. If there exist provocative elements who intend to execute a criminal maneuver, they must be pointed out completely and judged implacably. Anyone opposed to this makes himself an accomplice of the inadmissible schemes of the enemies of the proletariat.

We propose a Commission of Inquiry formed by representatives of all the workers' organizations - for us the bourgeois ones do not count - so that they may demand of the calumniators proofs of the accusations that have been launched, and publicly give an account to the working-class of the results of their activity.

We have sufficient reason to suspect that there is an attempt to involve us in an act of provocation and we appeal to the class solidarity of the workers' organizations.

Yours for the Proletarian Revolution,

LOCAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE POUM.

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TWO INEXPLICABLE TELEGRAMS FROM LARGO CABALLERO TO THE POUM.

("La Batalla" - February 10, 1937)

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From the President of the Council of Ministers and the Minister of War to the Iberian Communist Youth (JCI - POUM Youth Section), Manresa.

Following your telegram of yesterday on the suspension of Radio POUM Madrid and seizure of print shop "Combatiendo Rojo" am informing you it is not a question of the Cen-

tral Government but of the Generalidad.....

"President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of War to the Secretary of the POUM (Lerida)
Seizure of Radio Station POUM and suspension of "Combatiente Rojo" is question affecting Government Generalidad, the Central Government not intervening in this matter!...

Fantastic ! Largo Caballero maintains before our Lerida section as well as the JCI of Manresa: That the Government of the Generalidad is to blame for the persecution which the delegate Committee for the Defense of Madrid is carrying on against our Party !

It is up to the Government of the Generalidad to clarify the accusation which the President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of War launches against it.

SOMETHING MORE ABOUT THE "MYSTERIOUS" TELEGRAMS OF LARGO CABALLERO
TO THE P. O. U. M.

("La Batalla" - February 11, 1937)

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We said yesterday in commenting on some telegrams of Senor Largo Caballero that we were convinced that the Government of the Generalidad had not intervened at all in the persecution let loose in Madrid against our Party. We said it and we were disposed to believe it but Senor Largo Caballero insists on his point and we cannot say to the Senor President of the Council of Ministers that he is lying. Etiquette forbids and we have not the necessary information.

We are disposed to believe that the Government of the Generalidad has not asked the Defense Council of Madrid to attack our periodical, "El Combatiente Rojo" and to seize the broadcast station of our Party in the capital of the Republic; but for this, it is necessary that the same Government of the Generalidad gives us an answer to the telegrams that Senor Largo Caballero sends to those who protest. This gentleman affirms that it is due to the government of Barcelona. Is this certain? At this moment, in fact, we don't know what to say.

If it is not certain, why does the man who bears the greatest responsibility for the Government of the country assert it with such firmness? Seriously, what could have impelled the Government of the Generalidad to launch a repression against our Party in Madrid? How does the Defense Council of Madrid obey orders from the Government of the Generalidad? How does Senor Largo Caballero who shows himself so jealous of the prerogatives of the Central Government against the interference of the Government of Catalonia tolerate that his high authority be flouted in this manner?

All these are things which we would like to clear up in order to know what we may expect from the men who govern here and also there.

And if in reality somebody has taken it upon himself to represent with full authority the Government of the Generalidad to ask for such a monstrous thing, it would still be good to know it, as much for our own sake as for the entire working class which has the right to know who is responsible for letting loose the repression against the organs of the revolution for the benefit of reaction.

Let us hope that this point, like the others, will also be cleared up.

SEÑOR CABALLERO WILL SAY --

"THE GOVERNMENT OF THE GENERALIDAD HAS IN NO WAY INTERVENED"

Says Senor Taradellas, referring to the Measures Taken In Madrid
Against the POUM.

("La Batalla" - February 12, 1937)

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Yesterday noon the Prime Councillor received the newspaper men in his office and made the following statement:

"I would appreciate it", said Taradellas, "if you would take note that the Government of the Generalidad had taken no action to the end of seizing the broadcast station in Madrid and the periodical published by that party in Madrid "El Combatiente Rojo".

The Government of the Generalidad has not done it because it cannot do it and has no motive for doing it. I repeat, the Government of the Generalidad has not intervened in any way. I suppose that there is some confusion."

Senor Largo Caballero affirms that the government has not intervened in this matter. Senor Taradellas in turn denies that the Generalidad has intervened.

The answer received by two sections of the POUM does not permit the supposition that there is any confusion on the part of the government of Valencia.

Consequently, we ask the president of the Council of Ministers to clarify the incident.

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A D A N G E R O U S C A S E

WHO GAVE THE COUNTERREVOLUTIONARY ORDER ? - ("La Batalla" - Feb.13,37)

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In spite of the denials of Senor Taradellas, Senor Largo Caballero, president of the Council of Ministers and Minister of War, insists in his telegrams to those who protest against the persecution carried out in Madrid against our Party by the Delegate Council of Defense, that this persecution is due, not to the Central Government but to that of the Generalidad.

We would not insist on this if Senor Largo Caballero did not flatly contradict Senor Taradellas. Before the new proofs we hope that the Councillor Delegate of the Government of the Generalidad, will ask the head of the Government of Valencia for clarification, since otherwise, the revolutionary workers of Catalonia will not know what to expect between the affirmations of one head of the Government and the negations of the other. It is to the interests of all to clarify this matter so that all may know where the responsibilities lie for these measures of a counterrevolutionary character..

LARGO CABALLERO TO OUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - "President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of War to the Executive Committee: The Measure referred to in your telegram was adopted by the Government of the Generalidad to which you should refer, since the Central Power cannot interfere in such decisions of the autonomous power. - Largo Caballero"

REPLY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE - "President Council - Valencia. Our telegram referred to measures adopted by delegate Council of Defense of Madrid this government against Radio Poun and "Combatiente Rojo" Madrid. - Executive Committee, POUM."

STATEMENTS OF THE CNT-FAI

THE MARXISTS WANT TO BREAK THE UNION

(Information Bulletin of the CNT-FAI, December 16th, 1936)
(English Edition - No. 19)

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In yesterday's press, a notice appeared concerning the discovery of a conflict between the two sectors of the UGT: the POUM and the PSUC, both represented in the Council of the Generalidad of Catalonia. A conflict of so violent a nature, that the parties involved wanted to exclude each other from the offices they hold in the Council.

The CNT, conscious of its responsibility in these historical moments, not only in deeds but also in words, published nothing about the said matter, hoping that the conflict would solve itself in an harmonious way by putting the interests of the Revolution above the interests of the organisations. During the last two weeks, the CNT tried by various discussions to convince them, that it is better to unite than to separate, and that, to achieve the total destruction of fascism as soon as possible, the cause of the proletariat demands mutual concessions from all.

These are decisive moments for the proletariat and for liberty. For now the fate of Spain and of the world is decided. One must not forget, that the destruction of fascism in Spain will mean the beginning of the end for international fascism.

From the very first moment, when the fascist danger revealed itself, the CNT demonstrated that it was prepared to place everything at the disposal of the struggle against reaction: The sacrifice of our best comrades, and the willingness to cooperate with those very persons who, before, had bitterly attacked us.

The pact which all the antifascist organisations signed when they constituted the Council of the Generalidad, was an agreement of honor in which we did not demand, nor do we demand now, the representation corresponding to our unquestionable majority. Above all, differences of tactics, ambitions and personal sorrows, we declared unanimously, that, until the war was ended and fascism totally destroyed, all sections represented in the Council will maintain the spirit of cooperation. The CNT acts according to this pact, true to its promise, because it always keeps its word of honor. It asks that all sections represented in the Council of the Generalidad must continue their cooperation.

At this moment, when all party conflict is suicidal, there must be but one aim: Victory over fascism! And but one slogan: To maintain the antifascist front!

From morning till night there must be but one activity: Intense work! so that the blood of our comrades, fallen on the battle-fields, has not been shed in vain.

If in the face of everything, one section wants to exterminate another, without considering the common interests of the proletariat, or creates conflicts which will cause others to abandon responsible positions which they took up voluntarily, the National Confederation of Labor declares in all earnestness, that it will not fail its duties, that it will never leave a single one of its positions of responsibility or danger.

Let us be worthy the people we represent! Don't let us forget that those who abandon their positions before they have accomplished the end for which they united, will be considered deserters by Catalonia and by history.

For the destruction of fascism!
For the emancipation of the workers!
For the freedom of the people!
All antifascists must unite!

Committee Regional of
Catalonia of the CNT
of Spain.

THE SPANISH PROLETARIAT IS NOT FIGHTING FOR THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC.

(English Edition, CNT Information Bulletin, February 11, 1937)

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With the purpose of falsifying the true significance of the struggle that is being made by the Spanish proletariat with singular heroism, certain elements have commenced a campaign stating that we are fighting for the democratic and parliamentary republic. In order to support these statements they give incomprehensible reasons which would convince nobody. Those persons who dream of a more or less quick return to the political disillusionment. This policy of criminal indecision, of which the war is the bloody epilogue, cannot possibly gain the upper hand again and destroy the country anew.

The democratic parliamentary republic, with socialist pretensions, was not capable of preventing the criminal attack of the military traitors on the Spanish proletariat - an attack which was prepared with the passive complicity of these politicians who were fully aware of the preparation and yet were unable to prevent, with the necessary energy and activity, the mass murder of the Spanish workers.

We shall make no reference to the texts of Marx, Engels and Lenin. To do so would be puerile. No one knows better than the Marxist comrades, the innumerable controversies existing between the various Marxist organisations and it is enough to refer to their journals in order to find hundreds of arguments against their present political course.

The Spanish revolution has passed already the bourgeois democratic stage. Under no pretext whatever, can the workers be asked to renounce all that which they have gained. The supposed incapacity of the masses to fulfill their initial task is a trick; a trick that smells of the old parliamentary politics and can no longer

be accepted by anyone. In reality, it must be admitted that the Spanish people have proven themselves to be quite capable of continuing the revolution. Some persons pretend that this can proceed without wounding or damaging the interests of anyone. Of course, that is not possible.

The proletarians and the peasants have thrown themselves, with tremendous enthusiasm, into their creative work. They work without cessation. No one could demand that everything should be done perfectly. The workers of Spain are not learned men. They did not have time to enter the universities. Many of them, as a matter of fact, are alphabets; but alphabets with a soul and a heart. Alphabets who do not enter into profound discussions, who do not know the profound mysteries of international politics but alphabets who are working with incredible force, from early morning till late evening, for the reconstruction of Spain. And who, at the same time, are giving all they can for the triumph of the revolution and the victory of the armed proletariat. In short, for the construction of the new classless society, in which all men will be free and equal.

The politicians must have no illusions. Democracy is dead. Democracy, as the political expression of a class, and which was unable to fulfill its historic task must be relegated to the museum of antiquities. To pretend that the proletariat must sustain such democracy is nonsense in excelsis. And nonsense which proved very expensive for the German proletariat and would be even more so for the workers of Spain. The Spanish proletariat is struggling for its revolution and not for a democratic parliamentary republic. Everyone must be convinced of this. The workers in Spain are fully conscious of the fact that the blood of their comrades who have fallen under the fire of fascism, was not given for that purpose.

THE SPANISH REVOLUTIONISTS AND THE PROBLEM OF THE STATE

("La Revolution Proletarienne" - January 10, 1937)
(Revolutionary Syndicalist Organ - Paris)

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In the course of the past fortnight, the situation seemed to have improved from the military point of view to the benefit of the government forces; the exaggerated optimism of the journalists at Barcelona and Valencia reflects this fact in their pompous headlines. Here is one from "Solidaridad Obrera" of December 31, 1936; "Franco is defeated. The English observers say that the factionalists have lost the war in spite of the fact that Italy and Germany continue to help them".

But together with the improvement at the front, the social struggles in the interior have become sharper; they show themselves in a violent conflict between Socialists, Communists and Left Republicans on the one hand, and the anarcho-syndicalists on the other. In Madrid, they took on an extremely violent character which can be glimpsed in the case of Pablo Yague.

On December 25, "Solidaridad Obrera" published a long extract from a manifesto signed by numerous political and trade union organizations, announcing an attempt against Pablo Yague of the Communist Party, member of the Defense Council of Madrid, reading as follows:

"Today's attempt has shown us that the Fifth Column has not been liquidated and that it is not only active in the interior but is trying to make use of the workers' organizations. This induces us to recommend that we proceed to cleanse our organizations in order to keep watch on our enemies and treat them as they deserve.

"Nevertheless at the same time we utter a cry of alarm to the anti-fascists of Madrid. The life of the leader is in danger. The more the enemy is put up against the wall, the more he will try to strike at the most remarkable defenders of our heroic capital in order to provoke demoralization among the fighters.

"Comrades ! be more vigilant than ever. The life of our leaders becomes more and more precious. Let the vile attempt against our comrade Yague serve to make still closer the bonds of friendship that exist between the working class and the mass of people of Madrid.

"Soldiers of the people ! let the attempt against our comrade Yague serve you to grasp your rifles with more energy in order to smash fascism as soon as possible, for we assure you that in spite of everything the rear is and will be ours.

"People of Madrid ! before the wounded body of our comrade let us declare once again our will to march unitedly on towards victory".

At first sight it seemed to be a question of an act committed by disguised fascists forming these secret organizations which are known under the general name of the "Fifth Column", after the allusion which General Queipo de Llano made to it in one of his speeches on the radio. A curious fact, the signatures placed on this manifesto brought the solidarity not only of the Socialists and Communists, but also of the Libertarian Youth, of the Federation of Anarchist Groups, and of the Federation of United Trade Unions.

Besides, "Claridad", organ of the UGT of December 26, 1936, gave the same version;

"The treacherous and premeditated crime of which the victim was the valiant militant of the Communist Party, the delegate of food supply on the Defense Council, has caused us profound grief. "Claridad", interpreting the unanimous sentiment of the leaders and of the masses of the UGT, condemns the crime with indignation and shares the regrets of its brother party".

But now the "Solidaridad Obrera" of December 27, 1936, gave an entirely different explanation in the following article:

"The Regional Confederation of Labor of the Center has published a manifesto today. In this manifesto, the said Confederation shows clearly the honest attitude of the CNT. It rejects the epithets which have been hurled against our organization especially the charge that it represents the 'Fifth Column'.

"The republican and Marxist press, says the manifesto, relying on the fact that the victim is one of their militants, wants to sow quarrels and confusion, doing harm to the union which we hope for among all the workers.

"In the case - the manifesto adds - where the victim was the comrade who was a member of the Defense Council of Madrid and a militant of the Communist Party, Pablo Yague, we have been characterized in a harmful fashion by the press mentioned above.

The event in the course of which comrade Yague was hurt happened in the following manner: Comrade Yague, charged by the Defense Council of Madrid with a mission in connection with supplies, left Madrid. His car, following the Aragon road, on reaching the level of the Libertarian Athenaeum (an anarchist club - Ed.) was stopped by the persons comprising the local guard of this center.

"One of the comrades, following the rule of this service, asked for the documents. He was answered that comrade Yague was a delegate of the Defense Council.

"Our comrade said that it was not enough to call oneself a delegate; that he did not know him, and that he ought to present the documents which are necessary to leave Madrid.

"Then Comrade Yague showed a red book, which he did not want to submit for examination to the responsible guard.

"Our comrade told him that this was also unsatisfactory, that he had a book with which he could not leave Madrid, without the previous consent of the competent authorities, the only ones who had the power to put their seal on this kind of document.

"Then Yague replied in an authoritative manner that he could not allow himself to be stopped like this, with such arguments, and ordered his chauffeur to proceed.

"According to the agreement adopted among the comrades on guard, a shot was fired into the air in order to scare the passengers and stop the car; but instead of stopping, the chauffeur put on more speed; it was then that the other comrades fired twice on the car, unfortunately wounding comrade Yague. This is the truthful account of the facts just as they happened, which the Marxists have tried to bring to the knowledge of public opinion in a distorted form and presented as the most execrable crime.

"In accordance with real justice, we say that the evil intention cannot prosper, and the whole organization which controls the activities of the CNT in Castile makes this a question of honor".

The document then quotes a series of well-known attempts against militants of the CNT and adds:

"Before this unworthy procedure, we say publicly, and with all clarity, that we are honestly prepared to make still closer the ties of fraternity with all the anti-fascists; but that in the face of the situation of violence to which certain ones wish to bring us, we shall answer in a suitable manner, and shall not permit a single time that, after comrade Yague was wounded, the comrades of our organization be assassinated by those who light the flames of unrestrained passion.

"Three militants of the CNT have been found dead on the sidewalks of the capital city in the last few days".

The manifesto closes by saying that it will in no wise be permitted that the comrades on trial for the act of which Yague was a victim shall be condemned to any penalty whatever, since they do not deserve any, having simply carried out the duties with which they were charged, as guards who were supposed to control the circulation of those who travelled by the highway.

"And we say" adds the manifesto, "that we will not tolerate it, nor make any new visits to find a solution to the conflict, if we find a single day more a militant of the CNT dead in the streets of Madrid, killed by a bullet of unknown origin. Let those take note of it who should, for we use a language which is clear and without euphemisms, in order to finish once and for all".

The syndicalist daily "C.N.T." of Madrid was suspended for an indefinite period for having published this manifesto; its last issue was confiscated at the

print shop. Before the protests of the CNT, it was able to appear again after four or five days of silence.

The Yague case, in spite of its seriousness, is only an individual case; it has simply allowed us to realize the tension existing in Spain among the government forces created by the impossibility of obtaining an antifascist unity limited to the defense of democracy. But the demonstration of women of the people against the shortage of bread which has just taken place in Barcelona is a painful symptom of infinitely more importance. Is this situation due exclusively to the fact of the civil war? Or is it aggravated by the incapacity of the leaders of the political and trade union organizations as a whole? Or is it on the contrary a genuine tactic combined among the socialists, communists and the "Esquerra" (petty bourgeois "Republican" Left-ed) in order to utilize these difficulties, to accentuate them, to make the anarcho-syndicalists responsible for them, and to discredit for a long time the very idea of collectivization and a workers' regime, all this to consolidate bourgeois democracy?

In order to permit the working-class reader to judge for himself, here is first of all an extract from a speech by Comorera, communist minister of supplies, in judging the work of the Barcelona government ("Information", Dec. 24, 1936):

"Comorera declared that the former Council had completely failed, for all the decisions which it made could not be effectively applied.

"It was unable to carry out effectively the mobilization which it had decreed. The taxes were not received. All kinds of articles of prime necessity are lacking, although they exist in the country. The distribution of labor is defective.....

"The warehouses of the Department are almost empty. Within the region everything exists. But the municipal councillors of supplies, on the one hand, and the defense committees, on the other, acting for their own account, have prohibited the shipment of article of food to the capital.

"These various committees of the city and of the villages have taken the place of the middlemen. They levy an illegal tax on all merchandise going to the cities, or distributed by them for resale. In this way, prices are going up constantly according to the caprice of those interested.

"This situation cannot last any more. The legitimate authority must be able to impose its will. It was for this reason alone that the new Council demanded "Full powers" as against the irresponsible dictatorship of the committees and the "uncontrollables".

Here are some extracts from the answer to this argument broadcast by the CNT-FAI radio stations and published by "Solidaridad Obrera" on December 27, 1936.

"The charges hurled against the CNT by an influential militant of the Catalan socialists, in regard to the question of bread, cannot bring any remedies to the difficulties which Barcelona finds at the present moment in obtaining supplies of flour. But, if they are not refuted, they can foment dissatisfaction and attacks against our organization. That is what they are trying to do. In the past crisis, the only objective pursued was to eliminate a revolutionary party which has a certain amount of forces in Catalonia (the POUM - ed). Once this first result was obtained, they must not try to repeat this maneuver with the CNT by cleverly exploiting the natural difficulties which Barcelona encounters in supplying itself with flour, by loading us with the blame for faults for which we are not responsible....

"Nothing helps to break down a regime as much as a popular ferment. In all revolutions, in all wars, that is where the appeal has been made in order to weaken the prevailing situation.

"This ferment is taking place now. Popular demonstrations have begun to take place. Long lines stand in front of the stores. The women of the people are protesting. They want bread. Not getting it in the quantities needed or under the necessary conditions, they protest, they look for those who are presumed to be guilty, and at the last minute, following wily advice, they make responsible for this situation the trade unions of the CNT and the Defense Committees....

... "Nevertheless there was no negligence. The people of Barcelona has been able to see this by the results. The accusations hurled against us are absolutely lacking in foundation; we do not understand why, on various occasions, the Defense Committees have been made guilty of a situation in which they could only arrange matters and prevent the richer ones from getting hold of products and depriving workers of them, while the business men would have enriched themselves with impunity by taking advantage of the actual situation.

"What are they trying to achieve by attacking the Defense Committees in this systematic manner? The people will not be able to understand it, remembering that from the first moment they were in each district constantly on the alert to frustrate the plots of the fascist elements; that thanks to their activities, the allies of Franco are chased even into the darkness in which they hide themselves; that they constitute one of the surest guarantees for the workers in their struggle against armed reaction, against those who want to make triumph in Catalonia the so-called government of Burgos".

But what are the facts which permit us to state that on the part of the PSUC (United Socialist-Communist Stalinist party of Catalonia - ed), a voluntary and artificial aggravation of the shortage of bread? Here is what "Solidaridad Obrera" of December 27, 1936 says on this subject:

"When our comrade Domenech was still in the Supply Department, he made great efforts before the central government to bring to Barcelona a large quantity of wheat coming from the enormous stocks that were kept at Ciudad Real to supply all Spain, but was unable to prevail on them to give us a kilo. Let the reader realize that the Ministry of Agriculture is in the hands of comrade Uribe, of the Communist Party....

"...Recently, after leaving the Committee of Supply, seeing what was about to happen, Domenech warned comrade Comorera that it was possible to buy two hundred carloads at Gissona. They sent out trucks to get the wheat. The peasants demanded payment in cash. The transaction was not carried out, and certainly not through the fault of the peasants, but because of someone who was interested in having Barcelona run short of bread in order to play politics with the needs of the public. The same thing happened with the forty carloads at Cervera. We could enumerate other concrete cases, but we do not want to inject too much poison into the question. Our pen must make an unheard-of effort not to let itself be carried away by indignation. We want above all to make clear our firm position in the face of the conflict which is brewing.

"Everything that is happening permits us to think that an excuse is being sought to embroil the men of the CNT with public opinion. Difficulties in our work are being prepared for us, and the same thing happens when it is a question of asking for arms so that the columns formed by the men of the CNT can confront the enemy".

The CNT allowed the POUM to be eliminated. It did not react with the vigor which its prestige and its numerical forces permitted. Now we see it attacked in its turn by the coalition of the socialists, communists and the Esquerra. Being much more powerful than the POUM, it has better chances to resist. Only, will not fascism utilize these internal conflicts in order to resume the offensive with greater vigor? In any case, it seems that there is a drive within the FAI-CNT to get rid of the concessions made to its pretended allies who, too often, appear as disguised enemies. In answer to the attack against the collectivization of industries which is taking form, a genuine current is gathering in order to deepen this collectivization. Taking note

of the plague of bureaucracy imposed by the Generalidad, to put a brake on and to domesticate the collectivization, there are important unions of the CNT, such as the recent congress of the Wood Workers Union, or the central organ of the FAI, "Tierra y Libertad", which declare themselves in favor of the syndicalization of the factories, that is, for their management by the unions, exclusively, eliminating the State.

Is not this effort taking place too late? Has not a great part of the resources and of the revolutionary ardor (of the workers) been consumed already in the course of the past five months? On the other hand, before July 19th, in the FAI as well as in the CNT they always kept away from any systematic and organized education and preparation, confusing this with reformist bureaucracy, flattering the characteristic Spanish state of mind which wants to obtain everything by a passionate spurt, finding excuses for the lack of knowledge. Under these conditions, where to obtain the revolutionary cadres necessary for the organization of technology? If only the despotic elements of Communism and the Esquerra do not utilize the results of these mistakes of the past to impose the iron heel of a State which will boast of being democratic while in reality consecrating a new oppression!

L. Nicolas.

TROTSKY on the JEWISH QUESTION

TROTSKY DECLARES JEWS MUST HAVE A LAND

(Article in the Jewish liberal daily, "Der Tog", and in the New York "Forward", Jewish "Old Guard" Socialist daily, January 24th, 1937)

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"The Jews must have a land," declared Leon Trotsky in a special interview packed with sensational statements regarding his approach to the Jewish problem. The questions were put to Trotsky in writing by M. Rosenberg Mexico representative of the "ITA" (Jewish Telegraphic Agency) and by K. Landau, M. Glikovsky, and A. Weisbaum of the local Jewish paper "Der Weg". The questions were asked and also answered in French, in a special signed document. The complete text of the interview given to the press representatives by Trotsky is given here in full."

REGRETS THAT HE DOES NOT KNOW YIDDISH - Before replying to your questions, I wish to state that I deeply regret not having learned the Jewish language, which developed only after I had become a grown man. I have never had and have not now the possibility of following the Jewish press, and this prevents me from taking a final position on the various aspects of so important and tragic a problem. Therefore I cannot pretend to be much of an authority in the answering of your questions. Nevertheless I shall attempt to reply to them to my best understanding of the issues.

HISTORY HAS NOT CONFIRMED ASSIMILATION - In my youth, I was more inclined to the position that the Jews of the various countries would assimilate, and the Jewish problem would thereby almost automatically cease to exist. The historical development of the last century has not, however, confirmed this position. Declining capitalism has everywhere led to a bestial nationalism, of which anti-semitism is one part. The Jewish problem has for this reason come to the surface in the most developed capitalist countries of Europe, as in Germany. On the other hand, the Jews of the various countries have established their own press and developed their own language, Yiddish, as an instrument suitable to modern culture. We must, therefore, reckon on the Jews continuing to exist as a nation for quite a long period of time to come.

THE PEOPLE MUST HAVE A LAND - But the nation cannot exist unless it has a common territory. Zionism has been developed on this very idea, but the every day facts have not proven to us that Zionism is capable of solving the Jewish problem. The conflict between the Jews and the Arabs takes on an extremely tragic and threatening character. I believe that under no circumstances can the Jewish problem be solved within the framework of decaying capitalism and under the control of British imperialism. "How", you will ask, "will socialism conclusively solve these very problems?" About that I can only speculate. Socialism, which has become the leader of our planet, or at least, of its most important sections, will have unbelievable opportunities in all fields. The history of mankind has already witnessed an epoch of mass migration on a primitive basis. Socialism will afford the opportunities for mass migrations on the basis of the most advanced technique and culture. Of course, this does not mean forced emigration, in other words, establishing new ghettos for certain nationalities, but voluntary migrations, or to put it better; this refers to migrations which specific peoples or sections of them will demand. The far-flung Jewish masses who will desire to live in a separate commune (kibbutz) will doubtless find a large and rich enough place in the sun. The same opportunities will be afforded the Arabs and other far-flung peoples. National topography will become a part of planned economy. That, in my opinion, is the great historical perspective. To work for International Socialism also means to work for the solution of the Jewish problem.

THE JEWISH QUESTION IN SOVIET RUSSIA - You ask whether there still remains a Jewish problem in Soviet Russia. Yes. It continues to exist just as there still exists an Ukrainian problem, a Georgian problem and even a Russian problem. The all-powerful bureaucracy is stifling the development of national culture just as it does culture in general. Moreover, the land of the great proletarian revolution is now undergoing a period of deep reaction. If the revolutionary upswing has brought out the best feelings of human solidarity, then the Thermidor reaction has brought to the fore, all that is low, harmful and backward in the environment of 170 million people.

CLOUD OF CHAUVINISM - In order to strengthen its rule, the bureaucracy has not even stopped at creating a certain cloud of chauvinism and anti-semitism, in particular. The last Moscow trial, for example, was arranged with the well-camouflaged and apparently unassailable purpose of presenting the internationalists as Jews without belief or law who are capable of selling themselves to the German Gestapo. Since 1925, and particularly since 1928, there has been going on a sinister enough anti-semitic demagoguery, hand in hand with symbolical trials against open progromists. You ask me whether the old Jewish petty bourgeoisie in Soviet Russia has been socially assimilated into the new Soviet State. I am compelled to give you a clear reply.

The social and national statistics in the Soviet Union are strictly propagandistic. They are used not to indicate the truth but to glorify the leaders and creators of all that is good. A considerable section of the Jewish petty bourgeoisie, and the lower and middle strata especially, have been absorbed into the huge apparatus of State industry, commerce, cooperatives, etc. This has resulted in an anti-semitic spirit, and the leadership employs expert cunning in turning and deflecting against the Jews, the dissatisfaction that exists against the bureaucracy.

BIROBIDJAN AND PALESTINE - In regard to Birobidjan I cannot offer a personal evaluation. I am not acquainted with the territory and still less with the condition under which the Jews are establishing themselves there. In any case, this concerns only a limited experiment. Soviet Russia is still too poor to solve its own Jewish problem, even if there were a much more socialistic regime than now exists.

The Jewish problem, I reiterate, is closely linked up with the emancipation of all mankind. *All else being done on this field can only be a palliative and a blind alley, as the example of Palestine demonstrates.

L. D. TROTSKY

*Final sentence omitted in "Jewish Daily Forward" version, but appeared in "Der Tog" whose version is identical in all other respects.

BARCELONA CONFERENCE

L O N D O N B U R E A U - A BUREAU WITHOUT PROGRAM !

FROM THE BRUSSELS CONFERENCE TO THE B A R C E L O N A C O N F E R E N C E

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("La Lutte Ouvriere", Organ of the French Section of the 4th International
January 1, 1937)

A Congress of People Without a Program

The Congress called by the "Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity" (London Bureau) at the end of October was distinguished by its extremely heterogeneous composition. The London Bureau was represented by: The Independent Labour Party of England, the S.A.P. of Germany, the Socialist Party of Sweden, the P.O.U.M., of Spain and the Maximalists of Italy. In addition there were present: Ferrat and Pivert of France; Liebaers, for the Belgian Anti-War League; some unknown English pacifists, seven groups from Palestine fighting each other in part very sharply, a small American group claiming to be for the Fourth International (and also anti-Trotskyite), and finally, the R.S.A.P. of Holland (Sneevliet) who thought he could be able to make fruitful use of the Congress as a tribune for the diffusion of his ideas.

Thus all the colors of the socialist rainbow were represented there: partisans, Stalinists, (some Palestinian groups), alongside of some representatives of the "left" of the Second International (Pivert); partisans of the merger, with reservations, of Second and Third Internationals (Schwab), alongside of certain partisans of the Fourth International (Sneevliet); routine tight-rope walkers of a new International (Brockway) together with people who at bottom have given up any International (Liebaers), or have no position at all yet (Ferrat). If we omit the POUM, all the other organizations from the quantitative point of view can be considered as negligible.

If we omit the R.S.A.P. too, the qualitative value of the others can be proven by the negative character of their dimensions. The only thing which they all have in common is the total absence of a program founded in principle.

The common description under which they can be placed is that of the "Without Program".

The actual Congress had, like all the preceding ones, the same "inoperative" character.

All concrete criticism of the policy of the participants in the Congress was carefully avoided.

Nevertheless the delegation of the POUM brought something of the spirit of the Spanish revolution into the deliberative hall, which troubled the former serene unity of the politicians and the pacifists.

It was thus that there resulted - although only in the corridors - violent conflicts "on apparently interminable considerations and discussions" (New Leader). Discussions which, if they did not result in a split, it was only because the routine bureaucrats knew how to use three means of help: a. finding of formulation behind which everyone can think what he wants; b. passing shady questions in silence;

c. the questions where neither method a nor method b are of any help are referred to the next Congress.

The London Bureau and the Spanish Revolution

The Spanish question absorbed the greater part of the time of the public discussion. The quintessence of Gorkin's speech was the defense of the entry of the POUM into the coalition government of Catalonia, in which he tried to excuse and to justify the present anti-Bolshevik position of the POUM by invoking the extraordinary differences of the situation in Spain in comparison with the situation of Russia in 1917.

To justify the dissolution of the Central Committee of Anti-Fascist Militias of Barcelona, the incomplete but the first Soviet of Barcelona, he declared that there were in Russia (contrary to Spain) Soviets but no trade unions and that on the contrary in Catalonia, the trade unions are destined to assume the role of Soviets.

In reality, the Catalan Soviets were liquidated in favor of the old bourgeois governmental apparatus.

Finally, Gorkin declared in just these words, "We cannot at the present stage discuss the political questions". The POUM would nevertheless "be disposed to furnish all the data", but is too much occupied with immediate questions to be able to open a discussion in the political domain.

With the exception of Field, to whom no attention was given, all the Congress members abstained from any criticism on the policies of the POUM,...

The presence of two representatives of the R.S.A.P. and of the sectarian Field, gave the party of the London Bureau, at least, although an actual necessity - a common aim.

The organ of the S.A.P. wrote : "The efforts of the Trotskyites had the happy result of showing that everybody ... delimited themselves sharply from the Trotskyites.

"It was clearly stated by Comrade Gorkin that there could be no question of making any kind of concessions to the Trotskyites and that the Trotskyite sections should not be invited to Barcelona."

We recall that during the year 1935, Doriot made similar statements. Fenner Brockway writes freely in the same sense. He writes in the "New Leader" - "The official Trotskyite groups boycotted the Congress, but we had the neo-Trotskyites, who were, if possible, even worse than the original Trotskyites.... The experience of the Brussels congress shows us that the attempted collaboration with little groups with one-track minds has no value."

The International Conference at Barcelona (in January)

But where the opposition came into conflict with all the more violence was when the concrete question was posed of the reason for the International Conference at Barcelona.

The left wing under the impulsion of the Spaniards spoke in favor of laying at that Conference, the foundations for the creation of the new Marxist revolutionary International, and of the delegates committing themselves on their return to their respective countries to driving forward the forces which work for the creation and the constitution of the revolutionary workers' International. This "Trotskyite" demand was completely unacceptable to the reactionary Schwab. He, who in 1933, signed the Pact of Four for the Fourth International, today does not want to hear any talk of

a new International. He is now for the "reformation of the labor movement" because that suits him for his policy of a German People's Front.

But for Gorkin, this was unacceptable. With the I.L.P., the R.S.A.P., the Maximalists, Field and other small groups he formed a majority of fifteen to six against the S.A.P., the Swedes, Kruk (the ILP of Poland), the Zionists and others. When Schwab was put in a minority, he withdrew all his proposals for amendments and modifications and made it known that he would not submit. The meeting of the Commission was adjourned. It was close to a split. But this would have obliged the whole left wing to begin seriously to work for a new International and thus draw closer to the "Trotskyites". But before this, all the members of the London Bureau recoiled in dismay.

Fenner Brockway developed again his talent as an intermediary and after suspension, he reopened the meeting with the statement that the commission had now declared itself "unanimously and enthusiastically" to commit the London Bureau in its entirety to support the Barcelona conference, which had not previously been the case. The resolution which was adopted assigned to the Barcelona Conference as its task, to "examine the conditions, to drive forward and to organize the necessary forces for the formation of a truly revolutionary International". (Translated from the English)

The Congress will be called simultaneously by the London Bureau and the International Secretariat of the POUM....

The London Bureau and the Fourth International

The International Secretariat for the Fourth International had decided not to participate in the Brussels Congress because this Congress, like its predecessors, represented only a meeting of parliamentarist diplomats who, as is stated in the Resolution of the world Congress for the Fourth International, serve, in the last analysis only to provide an international decorative covering for the centrist organizations.

The transformation of the POUM in the course of the Spanish events into a left centrist organization did not make any change in the general character of the Brussels Congress. It could not be used as a tribune for the diffusion of the ideas for the Fourth International, because it was held too far away from the center of the Revolution and therefore found itself isolated from the masses

If the Spanish proletariat still succeeds for a greater or less period of time in resisting successfully, and if, the treachery of the 2nd and the 3rd Internationals penetrates more and more clearly and concretely into the consciousness of the masses when finally the problem of the gathering of the truly revolutionary forces of the entire world will show itself as the only way to rescue the Spanish revolution and will become more burning, the idea of the Fourth International will penetrate more and more deeply into ever wider layers of the proletariat.

N. BRAUN

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WHY THE FOURTH INTERNATIONAL IS PARTICIPATING IN THE BARCELONA  
CONFERENCE.

Resolution of the International Bureau for the 4th International  
on participation in the International Conference at Barcelona  
scheduled for January, 1937, by the International Secretariat  
of the POUM and the Bureau for Revolutionary Socialist Unity

("La Lutte Ouvriere", Organ of the French Section of the 4th International, December  
25th, 1936)

-----oOo-----

Berne, dec. 2/36

1. The International Secretariat for the 4th International had decided not to participate at the October Conference in Brussels "against War, Fascism and Imperialism" called by the London Bureau. It acted thus in the spirit of the Geneva Conference for the 4th International which in its resolutions had emphasized the character of this conference of the London Bureau.

"The international conference of the two Bureaus mentioned above represent, like the 2nd International - but in a much smaller measure - institutions and meetings which are half diplomatic, half parliamentary, which serve only as a means to furnish to the right centrist organizations, a decorative international cover which permits them to carry on their opportunist national policy. The declarations and so-called decisions of the international conferences, already fundamentally eclectic, remain without any influence on the real policies of the affiliated national organizations.....(line of dots in the original).

"The proposed congress is then, under its true aspect, a big fraud, which can only paralyze the real proletarian struggle against war, fascism and imperialism. If this congress was composed of mass organizations of the working class, it would be profitable for the revolutionary organizations, without regard to the program or the apparent leadership to be present in order to expose the fraud before a proletarian tribune and oppose to it the program of revolutionary struggle. In the present case, however, participation in such a congress can only serve to fraternize with professional confusionists of centrism, or to unmask the leaders without masses before themselves. In any case, the movement for the 4th International refuses to participate in this deceit or to furnish a color of revolutionary dignity by sending a delegation. It recommends identical action to all affiliated organizations."

2. It is true that the POUM since this decision was taken has been able to gain mass influence, at least in one region of Spain, and in the eyes of a large fraction of the Catalonian proletariat represents the future of the socialist revolution.

The delegation of the POUM, about 20 strong, could not change the general parliamentary - diplomatic character of the Congress. Gorkin, the spokesman for the delegation, was no exception to the taboo on mutual criticism. The congress, the customary rendezvous for the leaders of centrist parties (whose roles are decided in advance), could offer no interest for an active intervention of the Bolshevik-Leninists. Nor could they make use of it as a mass tribunal to unmask centrism and pacifism and propagate our ideas for, excepting the POUM, the parties and groups did not represent either a precise ideology or an important mass. The congress itself was held far from the revolutionary workers of the POUM, and completely apart from the working masses.

Given the fact that the centrist bureaucrats were not exposed to any criticism from the rank and file, it would have been, on the contrary, easy for them, if the organizations for the 4th International had participated, to conceal the absence of any common platform of principles by unity in the struggle against Trotskyite "sec-



tarianism". For we must not forget that on this point, the representatives of the London Bureau are always and completely in agreement, and do not hesitate to quote the opinions of the Bolshevik-Leninists before their members in the most deformed fashion. If they were not given this opportunity for maintaining a pseudo unity, the differences which exist among them would inevitably have to come to light under the pressure of the Spanish events. For their "revolutionary unity" exists only under triple negation: anti-Trotskyism, anti-Stalinism, anti-reformism, while they do not succeed in coming to agreement on any positive point.

3. The participants in the world congress for the 4th International had expressed the opinion that the Brussels congress "by its own nature as well as the composition of the organizations which have made known their intention to take part, is doomed to impotence and incapacity to exercise the functions for which it has been called."

This estimation was completely justified, as proven not only by the fact that they had to remain silent on the most important problems (internal Spanish policy, Soviet Union, etc.), but also by the fact that they had to call a new conference in Barcelona as early as the beginning of January, which will have to resolve all the tasks postponed at Brussels. The Spanish revolution proves more and more insistently and concretely the necessity for a new International; the leaders of the POUM must take account of the will of their members to carry through an international regroupment on a new revolutionary basis, and that is why they decided to propose to the conference the following task, in spite of the violent resistance of the most reactionary wing of the London Bureau (Schwab):

"To examine the conditions, to drive forward and to organize the necessary forces for the formation of a new truly revolutionary International" (Translated from the English) ("Une nouvelle Internationale vraiment révolutionnaire") (Traduit de l'Anglais. In the original)).

4. The conference scheduled for Barcelona will be called by the initiative of the POUM and will be organized no longer exclusively by the London Bureau but in the first instance by the International Secretariat of the POUM. It is evident that it will offer no guarantee for the victory of our ideas, but it will create in the very heart of the Spanish revolution, entirely different conditions for a collective participation of the organizations of the 4th International. The Brussels Congress proposed only a general struggle against war, fascism and imperialism. The Barcelona conference sets before itself a more limited although still indefinite aim, i.e., the conditions for the creation of a new International. The content of the problem on the agenda for Barcelona is closer to our aim: the building of a 4th International. The manner in which the problem will be treated will therefore depend to a lesser extent on the routine of certain French, English, German, Swedish and other centrists, and to a greater extent on the spirit of the rank and file of the POUM, on the atmosphere that reigns in the center of the Spanish revolution and on the participation of the B-L.

5. That is why the Bureau of the 4th International has decided to participate in the Barcelona Conference. In doing this it is not at all guided by the deceptive hope of winning over the conservative leaders of the principal organizations of the London Bureau.

Before the eyes of the revolutionary masses, the representatives of the 4th International will confront their principles and ideas which cover all fields of the class struggle and which have been elaborated in the course of long years - the principles and ideas of Bolshevik-Leninism, with those of the centrist leaders. Such a propaganda during a public, democratic, honest discussion should result in bringing to light all the centrist ambiguities and weaknesses, and in favoring the evolution of the militants of the POUM toward Leninism.

THE INTERNATIONAL BUREAU

The International Bureau for the 4th International.

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I.L.P. 'UNITY' CAMPAIGN

THE UNITY MANIFESTO

***** WHAT THE THREE PARTIES HAVE SIGNED *****
("New Leader") January 22, 1937)

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UNITY OF ALL SECTIONS OF THE WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT ;
UNITY IN THE STRUGGLE AGAINST FASCISM, REACTION, AND WAR, AND AGAINST
THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT ;
UNITY IN THE STRUGGLE FOR IMMEDIATE DEMANDS AND THE RETURN OF A LABOUR
GOVERNMENT AS THE NEXT STAGE IN THE ADVANCE TO WORKING-CLASS POWER;
UNITY THROUGH THE REMOVAL OF ALL BARRIERS BETWEEN SECTIONS OF THE
WORKING-CLASS MOVEMENT, THROUGH THE STRENGTHENING OF TRADE UNIONISM
AND CO-OPERATION, THROUGH THE ADOPTION OF A FIGHTING PROGRAMME OF
MASS STRUGGLE, THROUGH THE DEMOCRATISATION OF THE LABOUR PARTY AND
THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT;
UNITY WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE LABOUR PARTY AND THE TRADE UNIONS.

"These are the objectives of those responsible for launching the unity campaign
- a campaign to revitalise the activity and transform the policy of the Labour Move-
ment.

"CHALLENGE AND ATTACK"

"Today is no time for defeatism or for breakaways; today is no time for re-
treat or for the abandonment of working-class unity in favour of class collaboration;
today is the time for a united challenge and attack. To weld the power of the work-
ers into an unbreakable front, to advance in the fight for Socialism, we must mobil-
ize for immediate objectives, clear in their appeal and vital in the battle against
reaction and Fascism.

"On the basis of unity let the whole Labour Movement declare its determina-
tion to oppose fascism in all its forms, to oppose the National Government as the a-
gent of British Capitalism and Imperialism, to oppose all restrictions upon civil and
Trade Union liberty, to oppose the militarisation of Great Britain. Let the Move-
ment declare its implacable opposition to the rearmament and recruiting programme of
the National Government, for that Government uses armaments only in support of Fas-
cism, of imperialist war, of reaction, and of colonial suppression.

"The fight for peace demands unbending hostility to a National Government that
can in no circumstances be trusted to use armaments in the interests of the working-
class, of the peoples, or the peace.

"To save the peoples of the world from the growing menace of Fascist aggres-
sion, the working-class must mobilise the maximum effective opposition; it must mob-
ilise for the maintenance of peace, for the defense of the Soviet Union and its fight
for peace, and for the pact between Great Britain, the Soviet Union, France, and all
other States in which the working-class have political freedom. Working-class unity
alone can ensure the winning of the battle for peace. Into the very foreground of
political conflict must be brought the demand for the nationalisation of the arms
industry and for the abolition of the caste and class system within the armed forces.

"Let the Labour Movement declare without equivocation that it supports the
struggle of the Indian and colonial peoples against imperialism, that it is with
them in their fight for free speech, a free Press, free meeting and organisation;
with them in the fight for their immediate demands in the struggle to alleviate
their position of economic and social servitude.

"WORKERS' NEEDS"

"Now is the time for the workers, conscious of their power and of the Movement's strength of purpose, to wage incessant struggles, political and industrial alike, for simple things the workers need. Let the Movement not wait for general elections, but now by active demonstration, win and organise support for —

Abolition of the Means Test;
T.U.C. scales of unemployment benefit;
National work of social value for distressed areas;
Forty-hour week in industry and the public service;
Paid holiday for all workers;
The abolition of tied cottages for agricultural workers;
Co-ordinated Trade Union action for higher wages in industry, especially in mining, cotton, and sweated trades;
Non-contributory pensions of £1 at 60;
Immediate rehousing of the workers in town and countryside in houses that are homes;
Power to get back land for the people;
Nationalisation of the mining industry;
Effective control of the banks, the stock exchanges with their gambling and private profiteering — profiteering accentuated by the armament boom;
Making the rich pay for social amelioration.
We stand for action, for attack, for the ending of retreat, for the building of the strength, unity, and power of the Working-class Movement."

WILLIAM MELLOR, STAFFORD CRIPPS, G.R. MITCHISON, (For the Socialist League).
JAMES MAXTON, F.W. JOWETT, FENNER BROCKWAY (For the Independent Labour Party).
HARRY POLLITT, W. GALLACHER, R. PALME DUTT (For the Communist Party).

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I.L.P. RESERVATIONS

The National Council of the I.L.P. endorsed the arrangements for the Unity Campaign, and authorised the Chairman and Secretary of the Party to sign the manifesto on its behalf. It made the following reservations, which have been accepted by the Socialist League and the Communist Party as a condition of I.L.P. participation:—

THE LABOUR PARTY — The I.L.P. has not been prepared to affiliate to the Labour Party until democratisation of its Constitution and structure has taken place, but it looks to the effect of the Unity Campaign to create the spirit within the Labour Party which will give reasonable hopes of such democratisation and of freedom to express the Socialist policy of the I.L.P. in agitation and action in representative bodies and elsewhere, so enabling it once again to become an integral part of the Labour Party.

INTERNATIONAL POLICY — The I.L.P. maintains its opposition to working-class reliance upon the League of Nations, the Collective System of Peace and Military Pacts between Capitalist Governments, and its disagreement with the policy of the Soviet Government in these respects. It advocates Pacts only between Governments in countries in which the working class have won political power. Whilst maintaining the political line of the party, the I.L.P. recognizes the need to subordinate criticism of the policy of the Soviet Union in order to mobilise support for Soviet Russia, arising out of its action in relation to Spain.

(Continued from page 4)

only repeating their disastrous flirtation with the CP of 1932-34, except that the Stalinists are forcing the issues harder now and will bring about a crisis in the ILP sooner on the issue of capitulation or political struggle. The SAP, with its leadership driving hard to the right toward Stalinism, has gone further and faster. They already belong to a People's Front; of course, they want to make it a "revolutionary" People's Front. This is to confuse the workers both as to what is revolutionary and what is a People's Front.

How long will it be possible for these disparate elements to hold together in the London Bureau, on the basis of capitalizing on the activities and mass following of the POUM? The answer will depend in part on what the revolutionists do.

Note: We reproduce Comrade Trotsky's article on the Jewish question as a matter of interest, not as representing the position of our organization. We expect to present our position in subsequent documents.

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